Leadership Guide

October 2005

Diversity Leadership Guide

The diversity leadership guide is designed to further the dialogue on managing diversity and stepping up to leadership. While the knowledge shared here is certainly not exhaustive, it has the ingredients to be educational.

This guide should serve as a catalyst for further dialogue with your direct reports as we continue to enhance our understanding of diversity, organizational performance and leadership The Diversity Management Office serves you as a function of the Office of the Director. In so doing, our goal is to help you create a workplace environment that supports unbiased opportunity for achievement.

> **Diversity recognizes that each of us is different and unique and that uniqueness is made up of a mix of visible and non-visible individual characteristics. Consequently, it makes sense that treating everyone the same is not necessarily going to work. Different people will have different aspirations, expectations, opportunities, responsibilities and needs. Therefore treating people fairly, respecting their differences and acting accordingly, creates and maintains an inclusive work environment.**

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Distinguishing Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are terms frequently used together. However according to The Workplace Diversity Network*: *Diversity* is described as the spectrum of human similarities and differences. It refers to the composition of people associated with the organization. *Inclusion,* on the other hand, describes the way an organization configures opportunity, interaction, communication, information and decision-making to utilize the potential of diversity. It refers to the organizational environment.

Achieving inclusion means creating the structures, policies and practices in organizational life that recognize the existence of multiple perspectives and signal the importance of learning from differences. Inclusion refers to the systemic nature of an organization. Inclusion is not necessarily limited to the way an organization deals with employees; it may refer to interactions with customers and clients, partners, vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors as well.

Organizations might be diverse without being inclusive. By broadening recruitment and improving retention, organizations could achieve greater diversity, expanding the differences and similarities represented by those who compromise it. However, the way interactions are structured could exclude acknowledgement of any but the predominate group's perspectives and concerns. Such organizations would be non-inclusive.

So what would an inclusive organization look like? **Organizations achieving inclusion would invite the synthesis of ideas, knowledge and perspectives. In doing so, inclusive organizations would encourage collaboration, support problem solving and promote creativity, flexibility and responsiveness to change. For organizations having inclusive internal policies and practices without being diverse, the potential of the inclusion to enhance organizational effectiveness would be limited by the extent of the organization's diversity. Without diversity, vision is narrowed. Pursuing high standards for workplace fairness and organizational effectiveness requires both diversity and inclusion.**

Attributes of Inclusive Organizations are:

- **Demonstrated Commitment to Diversity**
- **Holistic View of the Employees and the Organization**
- **Access to Opportunity**
- **Accommodation for Diverse Physical & Developmental Abilities**
- **Equitable Systems for Recognition, Acknowledgement & Reward**
- **Shared Accountability and Responsibility**
- **360° Communication and Information Sharing**
- **Demonstrated Commitment to Continuous Learning**
- **Participatory Work Organization and Work Process**
- **Recognition of Organizational Culture and Process**
- **Collaborative Conflict Resolution Processes**

* The Workplace Diversity Network is a joint project of Cornell University and the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ).

Ideas for Dialogue

1. Prioritize the attributes. Discuss their level of importance to the Center and your organization.

2. How does GRC currently stack up against the accomplishment of these attributes? Compare that to how you see your home organization.

3. What can you do as an individual and as an organization to create a more inclusive environment?